

Amendments to the Claims

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

Listing of the Claims

Claim 1 (currently amended) A self-cleansing system that performs routine and cyclical, self-cleansing activities without waiting for or detecting a system failure comprising:

- a) at least two subsystems, said at least two subsystems including an active subsystem and at least one available inactive subsystem;
- b) a communications link connecting said at least two subsystems;
- c) a local network capable of connecting said at least two subsystems to an external network;
- d) an arbitration mechanism capable of designating one of said at least one available inactive subsystem to be a designated active system;
- e) an IP address shared by at least said active subsystem and said designated active subsystem, only said active subsystem utilizing said IP address to output information to said external network;
- f) a transfer mechanism capable of:
 - i) deactivating said active subsystem, causing said active subsystem to become a deactivated subsystem; and
 - ii) activating said designated active subsystem, causing said designated active subsystem to become said active subsystem; and
- g) a self-cleansing mechanism capable of cleansing said deactivated subsystem, causing said deactivated subsystem to become one of said at least one available inactive subsystem.

Claim 2 (original) A system according to claim 1, wherein said arbitration mechanism uses a criterion to select which of said at least one available inactive subsystem is to be designated said designated active subsystem.

Claim 3 (original) A system according to claim 1, wherein said transfer mechanism is activated by a transfer criterion.

Claim 4 (original) A system according to claim 3, wherein said transfer criterion is a fault detection criterion.

Claim 5 (original) A system according to claim 3, wherein said transfer criterion is an intrusion detection criterion.

Claim 6 (original) A system according to claim 3, wherein said transfer criterion considers time.

Claim 7 (original) A system according to claim 1, wherein at least two of said at least two subsystems are firewalls.

Claim 8 (original) A system according to claim 1, wherein at least two of said at least two subsystems are servers.

Claim 9 (original) A system according to claim 1, wherein at least two of said at least two subsystems are gateways.

Claim 10 (original) A system according to claim 1, further including an integrity check capability.

Claim 11 (original) A system according to claim 1, further including an audit capability.

Claim 12 (original) A system according to claim 1, wherein said self-cleansing mechanism includes a capability to reboot at least one of said at least two subsystems.

Claim 13 (original) A system according to claim 1, further including shared storage accessible by at least two of said at least two subsystems.

Claim 14 (original) A system according to claim 1, wherein said communications link is part of said local network.

Claim 15 (original) A system according to claim 1, wherein said active subsystem is a plurality of active subsystems.

Claim 16 (currently amended) A method of self-cleansing a system by performing routine and cyclical, self-cleansing activities without waiting for or detecting a system failure comprising the iterative steps of:

- a) designating one of at least one available inactive subsystem to be a designated active subsystem, said at least one available inactive subsystem being part of at least two subsystems, said at least two subsystems:
 - i) include an active subsystem;
 - ii) are connected by a communications link;
 - iii) are capable of sharing an IP address; and
 - iv) are connected to a local network that is capable of connecting to an external network;
 - b) when a transfer criterion is satisfied:
 - i) deactivating said active subsystem, causing said active subsystem to become a deactivated subsystem; and
 - ii) activating said designated active subsystem, causing said designated active subsystem to become said active subsystem; and
 - c) cleansing said deactivated subsystem, causing said deactivated subsystem to become one of said at least one available inactive subsystem;
- wherein only said active subsystem utilizes said IP address to output information to said external network.

Claim 17 (original) A method according to claim 16, wherein said step of designating one of at least two subsystems to be a designated active subsystem uses a criterion to select which of said at least one available inactive subsystem is to be designated said designated active subsystem.

Claim 18 (original) A method according to claim 17, wherein said transfer criterion is a fault detection criterion.

Claim 19 (original) A method according to claim 17, wherein said transfer criterion is an intrusion detection criterion.

Claim 20 (original) A method according to claim 17, wherein said transfer criterion considers time.

Claim 21 (original) A method according to claim 16, wherein at least two of said at least two subsystems are firewalls.

Claim 22 (original) A method according to claim 16, wherein at least two of said at least two subsystems are servers.

Claim 23 (original) A method according to claim 16, wherein at least two of said at least two subsystems are gateways.

Claim 24 (original) A method according to claim 16, further including the step of checking the integrity of at least one of said deactivated subsystem.

Claim 25 (original) A method according to claim 16, further including the step of auditing said system cleansing actions.

Claim 26 (original) A method according to claim 16, wherein said step of cleansing said deactivated subsystem includes rebooting said deactivated subsystems.

Claim 27 (original) A method according to claim 16, wherein said active subsystem is a plurality of active subsystems.